(c) The freight rates of certain commodities are adjusted suitably from time to time to offset the increase in cost of inputs. While doing so, the impact of such increase on the economy is also kept in view.

(d) and (e) The following measures have been taken to make railway freight rates competitive so as to win back traffic:—

(i) Reduction in classification of iron & steel, gypsum (lumps and powder), limestone and dolomite proposed for the year 1998-99.

(ii) Revision in taper of cement, coal and iron and steel, proposed for the year 1998-99 to provide relief to long distance traffic.

(iii) No general increase in freight charges has been proposed for the year 1998-99.

(iv) Reduced station to station rates for specific commodities are quoted in deserving cases.

(v) Container Corporation of India has created a separate Domestic division to make a major attempt to get less than train load non-bulk traffic from road to rail by using to multi-modal containerisation route.

Gauge conversion work between Nadiad and Kapadvanj

1951. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the gauge conversion work between Nadiad and Kapadvanj was completed in 1992-93;

(b) whether the work of Kapadvanj-Modasa Railway line is proposed to be taken up in the next Budget;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The work is already in progress.

(c) Earthwork and bridges will be completed in 1998-99. Track work is planned in 1999-2000 subject to availability of resources.

(d) Does not arise.

Renewal of Contract of Mobile/Hawking Book Stall

1952. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that every bookstall contract is renewed for a period of five years and that of mobile/hawking book stall is for a period of three years;

(b) whether this procedure is being violated by Eastern and South Eastern Railways in renewing these contracts for a period of one year basis for harassing the contractors; and

(c) if so, the details/reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) On Eastern and South Eastern Railway there has been deviation from prescribed tenure for renewal of mobile book stall contracts. These railways have been directed to follow the stipulated tenure in future.

Construction of Railway Bridges at Paddanakad, Pallikkara and Chorode

1953. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a letter from the Chief Minister of Kerala requesting to construct three railway bridges at Paddanakad, Pallikkara and Chorode; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposal and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.